CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.

SINCE the publication in the *Builder* of my letter on this obelisk, on the 2nd of July last year, and fresh matter in the *Times* of the 9th of September, by which influential journal the subject was taken up, the public mind has been much turned to the means of transporting it to this country, to which it belongs: and an almost universal desire exists to see it here. This wish I am happy to see is about to be gratified. In your number of this day appears an advertisement from the committee of the new Crystal Palace, inviting tenders for "the removal of Cleopatra's needle, and its safe deposit in a ship which will be provided for the purpose." Having taken so prominent a part in this matter, perhaps it may be allowed me to show what attempts I made to have its removal accomplished, and to point out where hints may be gathered likely to assist those who may be disposed to turn their attention to the contract. The accomplishing this object to the extent now required, is a matter of easy operation, small risk, and, at this time especially, of comparatively small expense. Steam power, skilful engineers, practised mechanics, and labourers, all abound in Lower Egypt, congregated by reason of the railway now forming; and we are credibly informed that the Pacha is well disposed to offer facilities. Moreover, the obelisk has been within the twelvemonth visited by and is well known to Mr. Robert Stephenson and many of our engineers and contracting men; and Mr. J. Scott Tucker, C.E. employed by our Government, reports it to be "a most interesting and valuable relic of antiquity, which the nation would be proud to possess." With all the present means and information at hand, the facilities are greatly increased, and the cost diminished, since I wrote. On June 6th, I attempted to influence her Majesty's Government, through Lord John Russell, and on the 26th of August, the Royal Commission of the Great Exhibition, but without satisfactory result.* Well, sir, what I failed to do by remonstrance, has been done voluntarily by the committee of the new Crystal Palace, much to their credit, and I doubt not hereafter to their advantage and the admiration of the public.

I will now give notices of references for those who may be disposed to consider the subject, with a view of tendering.

My first lengthy article appeared in the *Brighton Gazette* of 2nd July last year, and in the *Builder* of the 2nd August. I proposed to bring it to England, and gave various modes that might be adopted in detail; and the probable expenses of those different modes. In the *Times* of the 11th of August is an article by Dr. Beke; on the 13th a leading article; on the 16th the letter of a Traveller, with some good hints; on 22nd a letter from M. Giovanni D'Athanasie, who had offered to transport it in 1833. On the 9th and 26th of September a popular history of obelisks, with modes of transport, by myself; and on 17th November a letter from S. Briggs, esq. formerly H.M. consul at Alexandria.

I have purposely omitted very many communications, either mere repetitions or absurdities; and will only further state that in the "Campaigne du Lusquor," a book easily procured at Paris, will be found a complete and very interesting account of the whole proceedings of the French in taking down and bringing the obelisk to Paris; the most minute details of every incident in taking it from its foundation, moving it to the Nile, transporting it to Paris, and erecting it where it now stands; that on its pedestal is engraved the whole proceeding of its erection; and in the "Musée des Métiers et des Arts" will be found the machinery used.

As regards information on the obelisks of Egypt for those who have neither the learning nor the inclination to dig into the Greek writers or the archæological works of the Germans, most interesting matter will be found in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature, by many contributors, especially Bonomi; and very elaborately collected notices full of learning and research, by Mr. Birch, in an article in the third part of the second volume of the "Museum of Classical Antiquities," just published.

As to the cavils and sneers of those who affect to abuse all who have served the cause of archæology and history by rescuing such remains of long bygone times, by transporting them from the countries, now, alas! of ignorance, poverty, and fanaticism, to places of security, where they can be properly studied and made subservient to true history, or as models of high art—I pass them by. But I confess that I am sorry to have heard that M. Lepsius, with his Royal German Commission, in their too eager desire and too great haste to monopolise all that may still remain in Egypt—fast disappearing under the utilitarian and Mammon school, in which the Pacha delights,—should have committed much unnecessary violence, and left numerous interesting remains in a state of exposure to further devastation and atmospheric influences.

Should any gentleman think that by personal conference he can get any assistance or information, I shall most readily grant him an interview.

NATH. GOULD.

4, Tavistock-square.

* Mr. Gould forwards to us copies of the letters and replies, but we have not space for the insertion of them.—ED.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

Lyme.—The town water is to be supplied from a large reservoir, which is about to be dug at a convenient spot on the road to Uplyme. Fire-plugs are to be provided at various parts of the town.

Bromyard.—The Health Act has been applied to this place, and a local Board of Health elected. At Bromyard, however, as elsewhere, it is not all gold that glitters, for it seems that the very party which has strongly opposed sanitary reform here for years past have had the courage to regard themselves as the fittest persons to carry out the Act they repudiated, and have accordingly got themselves or their representatives elected in rather too strong force to offer much prospect of immediate benefit from the application of the Act to the town.

Louth, Lincolnshire.—We hear plans have been prepared by Mr. P. Bellamy, architect, Lincoln, and approved of by the town council, for the proposed new town-hall, the outlay of which will be about 4,000*l.* It is expected the building will be commenced early in the spring.——A corn exchange is also about to be erected at the same place, at an estimated cost of about 2,000*l.* for which plans, prepared by the same architect, have been approved of by the directors.

Tewkesbury.—The Abbey Church is being fitted up for gas, both for light and warmth, the latter effected by gas stoves already placed in different parts of the church.

Chippenham.—A movement is in progress for the erection of a district church in the immediate neighbourhood of the railway station, in the parish of Langley Burrell, approximating to the town. The Rev. R. Ashe, rector of Langley Burrell, has given the land, value 600*l.* for the site and burial-ground; and nearly 1,000*l.* have been already subscribed towards the building, the erection of which is estimated to cost 3,000*l.* in addition to the endowment.

Chester.—Building operations and the laying out of roads, says the local *Chronicle*, are progressing in the Queen's Park, though not very rapidly at present. Between twenty and thirty houses are now erected, and preparations are being made for the erection of many more: the works will be prosecuted with vigour in the spring of 1853. The carriage-road immediately above the bridge is nearly finished, and the side has been planted with trees and shrubs.

Wolverhampton.—It has been determined to accept the offer made by the Coalbrook Dale Company to sell, at a reduced price, the fountain which stood near the gates exhibited by that company at the Crystal Palace, and now put up at Kensington Gardens. The fountain, which is to be placed in the centre of the new market, is from a design by Mr. John Bell, and is taken from a popular German subject. "The Illustrated Catalogue of the Great Exhibition" describes it as an "ornamental fountain of cast iron, bronzed, 7 feet wide by 8 feet high, with group of 'Cupid and the Swan.' The group forms the jet, and occupies the centre of a tazza, ornamented with a decoration of the white and yellow water-lily." It is intended, it is said, to place it in an elevated position, in order that it may produce a more imposing effect. The works at the new market itself are rapidly progressing. The erection of the clock turret has been commenced. The last contract for the fittings has been taken by Messrs. Haywood, of Derby, and notice has been given to all the contractors that the works must be completed on or before the 22nd inst.

Birmingham.—A correspondent says the handsome fountain lately erected in the Market-hall, Birmingham, has been stopped playing entirely, at the request of the stall-keepers. To render this resolution permanent, a clock has been suspended to one of the trusses immediately over the fountain, and the works attached thereto are finished.——Almshouses for Glover's Charity, twenty-two in number, with other premises attached, are in course of erection in Steel-house-lane; Mr. Frederick Empson, architect.——A very large manufactory in St. Paul's-square, with an ornate front, is likewise in course of completion, under the same architect. Building in Birmingham is looking up, but the difficulty in building now is want of hands and not money.

Swindon.—There appears to be sad want of a new lock-up at Swindon. The present one is a veritable "black hole" of the Calcutta calibre. It measures 10 feet 2 in. by 5 feet 2 in. and 6 feet 4 in. in height, and the only opening for ventilation is a small grating in the door, which overhangs an overflowing cesspool immediately under or in front of it. Into this den, within the last four years, 1,200 *suspected* persons *of both sexes* have been huddled. There is no separate place for females: persons of both sexes are frequently shot into this hole together, and there compelled to associate night and day. For an exposure of these and of still more horrid details, and a subsequent examination of the place by several magistrates, the public are indebted to Mr. A. Wheeler, who gives an account of the matter in the *Devizes Gazette*, in which he also states that plans for a new lock-up were laid before the last Sessions at Devizes, by Mr. Sage, architect, who states his readiness to "provide a highly respectable builder" who will complete the work (and not in the plainest manner) for 400*l.* The cost of a site, it is said, will be 100*l.*; so that for the sum of 500*l.* a disgrace to the country may be put an end to, and many honest and well behaved, though "suspected" persons, treated in something like a decent civilized and Christianlike manner, such as even the guilty are entitled to.——We regret to observe that the Gas Company and the Gas Consumers' Association have not yet come to a friendly understanding as to the price of gas. The association demand a reduction to 5*s.* The company have come down from 8*s.* 4*d.* to 7*s.* They ought, at least, to engage to reduce their price another shilling in twelve months, and the remainder in the year following. We do think, however, that the association should not insist on an immediate reduction from 8*s.* 4*d.* to 5*s.*

Hedgerley.—The small dilapidated old church of Hedgerley, Bucks, has been taken down and a new one built near the site, under the direction of Mr. Ferrey, whose designs have been carried out by Mr. Thomas Hardy, of Cowley. It is in the early decorated style, and consists of a nave, chancel, porch, vestry, and tower,—the latter unfinished from want of funds. The exterior of the church is flint, with stone dressings, roofed with old square and new Gothic tiles, mixed. The window tracery is singularly chaste. The stalls are of oak. The pulpit, reading-desk, and altar-rail are carved of beautiful wood, from beams rescued from the ruins of the church of St. Peter's, Parham, Antigua, in the West Indies, and which was thrown down by an earthquake in 1843.

Little Gidding.—The church of Little Gidding, Hunts, once the residence of Nicholas

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